

REMARKS

As stated above, this Amendment Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.114 is being filed subsequent to a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Dee of February 27, 2004, but before payment was made of the Issue Fee and in support of the Request for Continued Examination (“RCE”) under 37 C.F.R. §1.114 which is filed concurrently herewith. Accordingly, Applicant notes that pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.313(a) no petition to withdraw the application from issue is required. Entry of this Preliminary Amendment is respectfully requested prior to further examination on the merits.

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 10-12, 15, 16 and 18-25 are pending in this application. As indicated in the Notice of Allowability, all of the pending claims (i.e., claims 1, 2, 4-7, 10-12, 15, 16 and 18-25) had been allowed. By this Preliminary Amendment, claim 18 is amended and new claims 26-35 are added. No new matter has been added by this Preliminary Amendment.

Applicant believes that all of the pending claims and new claims are believed allowable for at least similar reasons as in the Notice of Allowance.

Application No. 09/841,282
Amendment dated May 27, 2004
Reply to Notice of Allowance of February 27, 2004

Docket No. 1232-4709

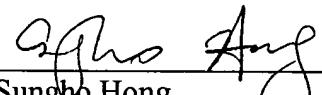
AUTHORIZATION

No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-4709). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: May 27, 2004

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